

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 EB-07 AGRE-00 /094 W
-----070934Z 094355 /17

R 070755Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2921
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 12325

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, CB, VN
SUBJ: CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE BORDER PROBLEMS AND RESULTING
VIETNAMESE MISSION TO PHNOM PENH

REF: BANGKOK 10839

SUMMARY: THERE IS A RELIABLE REPORT THAT VIETNAMESE OFFICIAL
TRAVELLED TO PHNOM PENH IN MID-MAY TO RESOLVE SERIOUS BORDER
CONFLICT. END SUMMARY.

1. DIPLOMAT OF AN ASEAN COUNTRY HAS PASSED TO US GIST OF
REPORT RECEIVED FROM HIS COUNTRY'S EMBASSY IN HANOI JUN 6
CONCERNING VISIT OF VICE FOREIGN MINISTER HOANG VAN LOI TO
PHNOM PENH, STORY WHICH WE REPORTED IN REFTEL WITHOUT BEING
ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY CONFIRMATION. CITING COMMUNIST MILITARY
ATTACHES IN HANOI AS SOURCES, REPORT STATED THAT SERIOUS
BORDER CLASH BETWEEN CAMBODIAN AND VIETNAMESE FORCES IN TAY
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NINH PROVINCE AREA DURING FIRST TWO WEEKS OF MAY WAS
REASON FOR LOI'S HURRIED TRIP IN MID-MAY TO TRY TO RESTORE
PEACE TO THE AREA. REPORT ALSO SPECULATED THAT LOI COULD
HAVE USED THE OCCASION TO ASK CAMBODIANS TO PROVIDE VIET-
NAM WITH RICE TO HELP ALLEVIATE PRESENT GRAIN SHORTAGE,
PERHAPS REQUESTING IT AS PAYMENT FOR VIETNAMESE SUPPORT TO
KDC DURING THE WAR.

2. SAME EMBASSY IN BANGKOK HAS HEARD FROM TWO OTHER SOURCES THAT LOI SOUGHT TO PURCHASE 100,000 TONS OF RICE FROM CAMBODIA, WITH CAMBODIANS AGREEING TO SUPPLY ONLY ONE-HALF THAT AMOUNT. THE STORIES AGREE THAT CAMBODIANS WOULD PERMIT THE RICE TO BE FLOWN OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON SOVIET TRANSPORT PLANES, BUT THERE IS NO INFORMATION AS TO WHO WOULD FLY THEM.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE ARE UNAWARE OF CLASHES SPECIFICALLY IN TAY NINH AREA DURING FIRST HALF OF MAY, THERE WAS SERIOUS FIGHTING ALONG BORDER AREAS NEARBY IN THAT PERIOD, TO WHICH REPORT COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN REFERRING. VISITOR TO HANOI WHO ARRIVED IN BANGKOK JUN 6 SAID THAT HANOI WAS BUZZING OVER THE CLASHES, WITH TALK THAT THE TOWN OF CHAU DOC WAS ON THE FRONT LINE AND THAT LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES (NATIONALITY UNSPECIFIED) WERE INCURRED. LOI'S PEACEMAKING VISIT IS FIRST ONE OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE SINCE CPV GENERAL SECRETARY LE DUAN TRAVELLED TO PHNOM PENH FOR THE SAME PURPOSE SOMETIME IN LATE 1975.

4. ALL GOES TO SHOW, AS EMBASSY HAS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, THAT CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS REMAIN POOR. THERE IS NO WAY OF EVALUATING THE RELIABILITY OF THE REPORTS NOTED ABOVE THAT THE SRV WANTS CAMBODIAN RICE, ALTHOUGH A CAMBODIAN DIPLOMAT IN HANOI DID TELL A VISITOR LAST WEEK THAT HIS COUNTRY HAS ALREADY SOLD SOME RICE TO VIET-NAM. ONE HANOI DIPLOMATIC OBSERVER WHO ATTENDED CAMBODIA'S APR 17 NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION IN THAT CITY NOTED INTEREST-CONFIDENTIAL

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INGLY THAT PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS ON VIETNAMESE SIDE WERE PARTY RATHER THAN GOVERNMENT FIGURES, POSSIBLY INDICATING THAT, IF NOTHING ELSE, AN EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO MAINTAIN PARTY SOLIDARITY. ONE VIETNAMESE ATTENDEE WAS SRV AMBASSADOR TO PHNOM PENH PHAM VAN BA, WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED FROM POST APPEARING RATHER GAUNT AND WITH LITTLE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT HIS ASSIGNMENT.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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